



# Meal Delivery Volunteer Handbook

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[www.samow.org](http://www.samow.org)



Welcome to Meals on Wheels San Antonio – a program of Christian Senior Services. Christian Senior Services was established in 1977. It began with a delivery of 8 meals and over the course of nearly four decades, has provided more than 900,000 meals each year to people in need. We are a 501(C) 3 nonprofit organization, with an independent Board of Directors, providing services that support the dependence and dignity of Bexar County seniors. Our programs include Grace Place Alzheimer’s Centers, Companionship programs and Meals on Wheels.



Meals on Wheels San Antonio delivers nutritious food to elderly and disabled persons residing in Bexar County. The meals we deliver, as well as the daily visit from our volunteers, provide nutrition and companionship that nourishes the body and soul of our seniors. Your visits allow our seniors to remain in their homes and continue living independently. We encourage you to take time with the individuals to whom you deliver – the human connection is the best part of the experience.



We welcome and thank you for the critical role you will play in ensuring the health and safety of our seniors. This orientation will provide you with the essential knowledge needed to perform the duties of a Meal Delivery Volunteer. This handbook summarizes the major points. Please keep it for future reference.

**It's more than a meal.**

Thank you for giving generously of your time to Meals on Wheels of San Antonio. Remember, it's so much more than a meal!

## Who We Serve

**How is someone referred to Meals on Wheels?** Self-referral or being referred by family, friends, doctors, and community service agencies, such as United Way. Funding comes from federal, state and local resources, and donations.

Eligibility typically requires being:

- 60 years of age and older
- Unable to leave their home without assistance
- Unable to prepare a meal for themselves or have anyone in the home to prepare the meal for them

Our staff of case managers personally assess – each client for eligibility with a home visit. Regular reassessments are conducted throughout the client’s time on our program to ensure continued eligibility and address additional needs with referrals to the appropriate service organizations.

MOWSA has a contract with the State Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) to provide meals to their clients. These meal recipients have their own case manager and their own requirements for state funding. A small percentage of deliveries may be provided for persons less than 60 years of age. If you have questions or concerns regarding the eligibility of a client please call the MOWSA office.

# Meal Delivery Volunteers

## ■ Role

- As a Meal Delivery Volunteer, you are often the only contact our clients have all day. You provide the warm smile and caring attitude that our clients look forward to. You are the safety check to help ensure our clients' well-being. You are the eyes and ears of Meals on Wheels and often alert us to clients who may have additional needs. Showing up makes the difference.

## ■ Qualification requirements

- All volunteers must be at least 18 years of age. Minors are welcome to participate in meal delivery if accompanied by an adult. Your route placement will be provided once we have all of the following:
  - A completed, signed application and confidentiality agreement
  - Verification of each volunteer's current, valid driver license and current vehicle insurance
  - A completed and approved criminal background check
    - Meals on Wheels San Antonio accepts the service of all volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of the agency.
    - Offenses of a violent nature or involving theft may render a volunteer ineligible to serve with our program. Final decision will be made by MOWSA management.
  - Confirmed attendance at one of our in-person Volunteer Trainings.



## ■ Volunteer Code of Ethics

- Performance Standards
  - Maintain an environment free of harassment (physical, sexual or verbal), discrimination and unprofessional conduct.
  - All client, volunteer, and staff records are considered confidential. All information concerning any MOWSA client is strictly confidential. All concerns, observations or questions concerning a client, the client's family and the client's service are to be discussed with the MOWSA staff **only**.
  - Avoid activity that may create a conflict of interest.
    - Neither accept loans or gifts of money or property from clients nor give gifts of money or property to clients unless approved by MOWSA staff.
  - Refrain from offering medical, legal or financial advice to clients.
  - Respect the cultural, religious and political views of clients and refrain from imposing yours on them.

## ■ Road Safety

- MOWSA endeavors to deliver in all types of weather. If, due to severe weather conditions, this is not possible, we will take action to provide for clients in the greatest need. Our Client Services and Community Engagement staff will make those determinations. We will use the City of San Antonio Guide To Street Closures. If you deem a street impassable on your route, please contact us.

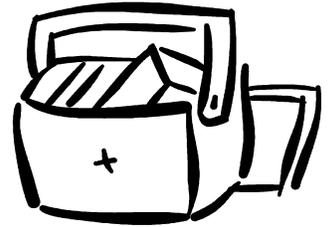
## ■ Situational Awareness

- Do not venture into any situation which does not seem safe to you.
- Report any unsafe conditions to the Meals on Wheels office.

# Before Delivery

## ■ Guidelines

- Meals must be delivered between 10:30 AM and 1:30 PM daily in order to comply with our funding requirements. We recommend you begin your route by 12 PM (noon), to ensure deliveries are completed by 1:30 PM.
- Before you handle any of the food please wash your hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds.



## ■ Route Sheets and Maps

- The route sheet is your guide to the day's deliveries. Included are:
  - Each recipient's full name, address, and phone number
  - The types and number of meals to be delivered to each person
  - The dietary needs of each person
  - Special instructions, including gate codes or requests to use a specific entrance, to call prior to delivering, etc.

## ■ Meals

- Each meal tray is marked with a detailed label. The label includes information such as:
  - Diet type
  - List of side items that should accompany that day's meal
  - Reheating instructions
  - Date of the meal
- There are numerous different diet types that our program can provide, including:

Regular	Bland	Chopped	No Milk
Diabetic	Renal	Ground	No Pork
Heart Healthy	Gluten-free	Pureed	No Seafood
- There are also several meal types:

Hot	Chilled	Frozen
Breakfast pack	Holiday Meal	Shelf stable meal

## ■ Packing up

- We encourage all volunteers to bring their own insulated containers. Hard or soft-sided coolers or insulated bags work well for this. Containers that are from 24 to 30 quarts are an ideal size.
  - Each route will use two insulated containers – one for hot meals and the other, for cold side items.
- **\*\*\*REMEMBER: Wash your hands before handling the food.\*\*\***

- As you pack your meals and side items, count all items to ensure that you have all of the meals (look at diet types) listed on your route sheet summary. If you are short a meal, please call our office at 735-5115, **before you begin your delivery**.

## Meal Delivery

### ■ At the client's home

- Remember to follow any special instructions on the route sheet with regard to reaching the client.
  - Use the specified entrance, gate code or call ahead, if indicated
  - If instructions say "knock and enter", announce yourself when entering.
    - Please do not enter a client's home unless indicated in the special instructions or you are invited in.
- Knock loudly, announce "Meals on Wheels", and give the client time to get to the door. Many are slow-moving.
  - If you do not get a response, try the doorbell or calling the client to see if you can reach them.
- Introduce yourself to the client when they come to receive the meal.
- If the client does not answer after your attempts to reach them, please leave a yellow "not at home tag" on their door.
  - Please give any extra meals due to "not at homes" to another client on the route. Do not return meals or side items to your pick-up site.
  - Please do not leave the meal outside, with a neighbor, or at an apartment office.
    - If a note is left asking you to leave the meal inside while they are out, please disregard.
- If you encounter a client who is visibly injured, disoriented, or unconscious, call 911 immediately.
  - Stay with the client until emergency personnel arrive.
  - Call MOWSA at 210-735-5115 so that we may call the client's emergency contact.
- If you have a non-emergent concern for a particular client's situation, please call MOWSA at 210-735-5115.



## Following Delivery

### ■ Route Sheet

- At the end of your route, call the Meals on Wheels office to report any of the following:
  - Clients not at home
  - Any changes/additions needed to the route sheet information (phone numbers, gate codes, etc.).
    - This information may be left on a voicemail message. Please be sure to leave the client's full name, address, and your route name on all voicemail messages.
      - The office receives a large volume of calls during delivery time each day.

- If you need to speak to someone immediately, please ask the receptionist to page an available member of the Community Engagement Team.
- It is a requirement that you shred your route sheet, as it contains confidential information.
  - If you do not have the means to shred it, leave at your site and we will pick it up and shred it for you.



## ■ Carrying Equipment

- If you use bags/coolers belonging to Meals on Wheels, please return them back to site/pick-up location immediately following your deliveries. The next day's volunteer will need to use these containers.
  - Bags/coolers should be empty, clean, and dry
  - Please remove ice bags
  - Leave the lids of the containers open to allow for them to air out.



## ■ Warmers

- If you notice any meals still at the site at the end of your route, call the MOW office immediately to report such.
  - Food should never be left at the site after deliveries, so this is likely a sign that another route has not delivered that day.
- If all meals are gone, please check to make sure the warmer has been turned off.

## ■ Keeping the MOWSA Community Engagement staff informed

- Occasionally, food spillages do occur and, if not cleaned promptly, can result in bacteria. If our warmers or containers are in need of cleaning, please alert the MOWSA Community Engagement staff.
- Please also alert the MOWSA office if:
  - The site needs some additional delivery materials (yellow door hangers/"not at home tags", copies of our current menu, etc.)
  - Equipment is in need of repair
  - Items need to be picked up, such as:
    - Completed client surveys
    - Route sheets left for shredding
    - Outdated material

